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A WEST HIGHLAND RIVER.

EVERY votary of the rod has, doubtless, his favourite loch or stream, to which he is attached by recollections of pleasant days of successful sport or early association, the 'good' hours by grassy bank or sheltered bay blotting out with kindly veil all memory of the bad or indifferent ones, and the sunlit mists of boyhood and youth enveloping with tender mantle the times of varying fortune which fall to the lot of all brethren of the angle.

The dry-fly fisher of the Hampshire chalk stream thinks lovingly perhaps of the delicate art which must lure the wary and lusty trout from its crystal waters. The centenarian angler of Tweed's noble river recalls with fond recollection the halcyon days of sixty years ago or more when 'record' baskets could be made, and netting, pollution, and poaching (at least in its latter-day forms) were but of trivial moment. And the hardy Highlander of the north or west pictures to himself his ideal of what a river should be—bold, rugged, and turbulent as his own ancestry were among their native mountains two hundred years ago. They are all entirely different in character, these angling waters, and each has features distinctively its own. The typical English trout stream, clear, sedgy, slow-moving towards the sea: the Scottish Lowland river, now swift and brawling, now deep, rippling, and slow, with its long pools and runs sweeping under the flat grassy banks, and brushing the overhanging tree stems, or margined by level bays of gravel or fine sand. But both of them are subdued and peaceful compared with the Highland torrent—loud-voiced, impetuous, black, and rocky, with pool of ominous swirl and depth, as it rushes headlong from its mountain fastnesses to pour those turbid waters into some hill-girt sea-loch or sounding bay of the Atlantic seaboard.

I do not know the mysteries of the English chalk stream, but I have fond recollections of the troutng qualities of many of the waters of southern Scotland, and they have undoubtedly

a charm which specially belongs to themselves. Their yellow trout are more numerous, and probably better shaped, better fed, and attain a heavier weight than any other in Scotland; their surroundings are peculiarly attractive to the lover of the peaceful and the pastoral; and they are deeply interwoven with Border legend and story.

Yet to the seeker after the impressive in nature, and the fisherman who delights in wild and rugged accompaniments to his sport, a typical Highland salmon river possesses unrivalled attractions and a grandeur and majesty of colour and motion which belong to itself alone. Such a river is that which I wish to describe.

It has its ultimate fountainhead and source amid the snows and mists of that wild region which surrounds the Moor of Rannoch and holds within it the higher peaks of the famous Black Mount Deer Forest and the desolate wastes stretching up to the mountains of Glen Etive and Glencoe. With a vast gathering-ground or basin, its waters are first of all confined in isletted loch and rugged pass, guarded on one side by steep, black, stony hills—yet relieved in their sternness here and there by tender green grass, brown bracken, and silver-streaked waterfall; and on the other by the granite base of a noble mountain, whose double-peaked cones rise nearly four thousand feet above it. Then, with a gathering rush, it pours its waters in a solid column of black and white, through precipitous gorge and narrow valley, over boulder and rock, and by tree-shaded grass-grown bank, in four swift miles to the sea—a series of wide dark pools, roaring cataracts, and deep, silent runs, beloved of the salmon as he comes, fresh coated in silver scale, from his salt home below. Verily, in every sense, a noble Highland river, of wild yet graceful sweep and immense volume, and with surroundings of mountain and wood, rock and heather, which it would be hard to surpass.

As to its fishing qualities, which after all is the first and absolute test in the mind of the angler, this can be said. It holds in its depths salmon of herculean proportions and weight, some up to

fifty pounds, while fish of from thirty to forty-five pounds are not uncommon, but alas! they cannot often be taken! Yet the average of the fish is distinctly high for a river of its course, while grilse up to nine and ten pounds are plentiful. Sea trout also of excellent average weight are numerous in summer, and in autumn the lively and sportive 'finnock' or herling—averaging from a half to three quarters of a pound, and giving excellent sport on a small rod and fine tackle; while an occasional good yellow trout of two to three pounds is to be caught, although this is not essentially a yellow trout stream.

But beyond and in addition to these qualities, it has distinctly this one—salmon fishing in its waters is by no means an arm-chair pastime. To hook a strong and lively fish of from twenty to twenty-five pounds, fresh-run from the sea, from an insecure foothold on a jutting rock or the light staging of single plank, to see him dash for the rapid foaming current, taking sixty or seventy yards of line from your reel at one arrow-like rush, and then to play him safely over granite boulder in mid-stream, or rocky headland far below you, following him down river over a perilous way of steep bank and stone-strewn shore, requires both nerve and skill, and a considerable amount of physical agility. But it is withal an exhilarating experience, worth going some distance to find, and very different in character from the fishing of the long flat pool and broad boat of the great waterways of Scotland or Ireland.

Needless to say, on such a river, and with fish of this high class, nothing but fly-fishing should be permitted, and in one instance at least this rule is rigidly adhered to. Trout fishing with worm, up stream, and in clear water and bright sunshine, with a light rod and the finest of tackle is an *art*, but to kill the lordly salmon with a bunch of worms, a pickled prawn, or other ignoble lure, is surely to put the higher gifts of Nature to the baser use!

Like most rivers, this one has, however, its varying moods and also its varying seasons, and its good and bad years. At times it can delight the angler's heart with the freedom of its rising fish fresh-run from the sea; at other times, sullen and unresponsive, it will sink his hopes to zero, or aggravate them to the breaking point of endurance by showing its leaping monsters or playful grilse in every pool, over which, however, he may cast his choicest fly and try his finest art in vain!

The season of 1896 was, unfortunately, one of the heart-breaking, soul-disturbing order. You had but to watch a favourite pool to see the larger fish, many of them probably over thirty pounds in weight, rising slowly like porpoises, their back fins showing curved and black as they cleft the water, while the grilse leapt high in the air and made their 'plash' resound above the roar of the stream; but even the deftest and most cunning hand might often fish over them day after day without any tangible result. They might surge up to look at his fly and even touch it for the briefest of moments, but there their affection for the gaudy floating thing only too frequently ended, and seldom indeed would they come to look at it twice. Those who knew the river best were most puzzled to account for this state of things. It could not be the netting at the mouth, for there

were plenty of fish in all the favourite casts, and the river was often in the best of angling trim, but still the fish did not come as they ought! Therefore it could only be that much abused element (which frequently carries so heavy a load of responsibility and anathema) 'the weather,' which, during the fishing season, was either fiery, unsettled, close, and generally unsatisfactory, or consisting of continuous rain, particularly in autumn, bringing down the water in floods and making it for a long time practically unfishable. That had, therefore, to be accepted as the solution, or else the problem remained an insoluble mystery.

The spring months are sometimes good, and last year were probably better than the rest of the season, but the summer time is always counted on as the best, and from the middle of June until the end of July may be deemed the cream of the year. On the best part of the river, however, the season of 1896 produced, during that time, something under forty fish as against from seventy to a hundred fish in a good year. Yet among the fish caught were one or two specially fine specimens of the genus *Salmo salar*, including one of forty-five pounds killed by a well-known angler.

It is now exactly eighteen years since I fished this good stream for the first time, and well I remember it. We thought of nothing higher or better than trout in those days, and were always more than well pleased if we killed a pounder in the course of the day. It was the beginning of September and it had rained continuously for the better part of two days and two nights before, so that the river was in heavy flood when we saw it first and rolled down in majestic volume to the sea, looking, to us, quite unfishable. Yet it was only very slightly coloured, and the afternoon was brightening up beautifully, and so we began with a 'yellow and teal' sea trout fly of small size and a 'black body and blue wing' of the same. Our weapon was but an eleven foot rod bent with light tackle and a free running reel, and, in the heavy water, it was grand sport certainly when the two-pounder sea trout came, as come they did in royal style. But darkness fell at last, and we staggered homeward under a heavy 'creel' (we have never had as heavy a trout one since) to the old 'Stage Coach Inn' and a late dinner. There was something over thirty-six pounds of trout to two rods for that afternoon's fishing, and a rather heavier basket under the same conditions on the following day—all fresh run fish from the sea, bright as silver, and strong and lively, even wild, when hooked. But these days come not often in a lifetime to the average fisherman of the stream, and when they do they must always live as pleasant memories in after years.

Now eighteen years have passed, and, through the kindness of a friend, we revisit this West Highland river once more, with some hopes of adding the lordly salmon to our basket. The best of the season is now well over, but even yet we may find the king of the wave inclined to satisfy the cravings of his instinctive curiosity with a salmon-fly. Well, some days are consumed in fruitless flogging of the stream, and we are unable even to 'raise' a fish. But at last and unexpectedly a sudden (but alas! momentary) change comes. It had been a fine morning but now the sky was overcast and a few drops of rain fell. We had put on, after trying several other well-

known and favourite flies (the 'Thunder and Lightning,' the 'Blue Doctor' and I think also either the 'Black Doctor' or the 'Butcher'), a 'Heron Wing' with roughly-dressed claret body—when lo ! in three successive casts in one pool we hooked three several fish. Two of them were played down stream through the rough water and over the huge boulders (which stood below the pool as danger posts to be carefully negotiated), and at last were safely gaffed by the eager but cautious Donald, and brought to bank—the one a well-shaped fish of seventeen pounds and the other a strong, lively grilse of eight pounds net. The third, and, of course, according to the recognised rule, 'much the heaviest fish' we never, alas ! saw. He rose at the tail of the pool, taking the fly under the water, and, without a moment's hesitation, dashed straight up the centre of the pool near to the strong eddy or current of white, foaming water which rolled in at the top. What happened afterwards is only surmise. But the strain of a strong, pulling, heavy fish never seemed to slacken for an instant, only he came to a dead stop somewhere in the deep water, and nothing would move him from there, although all the artifices known to the fisherman were successively tried. In the final result the twisted gut casting line or trace broke in our fruitless efforts to dislodge him, and there was an end of all things ! But we were not dissatisfied, and with some lively sea trout of well on to a pound to make up and vary the basket, we were fain to wend our way homeward toward the welcome dog-cart waiting for us at the old bridge below, as the shades of evening were gathering over the Ben above us, and the sun was sinking in a blaze of purple and orange in the west, while the distant hill-tops stood out clear and defined in the blue sky, now swept of mist and rain-cloud.

Perhaps our sport was not great after all, when compared with that of many who can boast their ten and twelve salmon in a day, but there is such a thing as a superfluity of good things, and contentment is the secret of happiness. And we were content, despite our natural sorrow for the lost 'big one,' and only wished we might always fare as well on that 'West Highland river.'

A TSAR'S GRATITUDE.

CHAPTER II.

ONE more incident in connection with Inkermann—that battle of the Titan Thomas Atkins—and I have done with the Crimea, which is, I know, a hackneyed subject, and must not be dwelt upon at any length.

Young Dostoief had been carried safely to the rear; the Russian commander-in-chief had disposed his forces; the two Grand Dukes had encouraged the troops of the Tsar by riding in and out, and saluting all and sundry arms of the service; the English, on the top of their hill, had made some little preparation for resisting attacks upon their position, and the great battle began. This fight of Inkermann was a magnificent 'scrimmage,' for it was at times little else; yet for all that, scrimmage, or Homeric battle, or whatever the historian may prefer to call it, it was nevertheless one of the grandest fights that British troops ever took a hand in. It was

Tommy Atkins' own particular battle, for his officers played a comparatively small part in the fray; and Thomas, on that great day, withstood, by sheer pluck and perseverance, the determined attacks of column after column of the enemy's picked troops, who outnumbered him as twenty to one. Not that the Russians fought ill! on the contrary, they struggled bravely enough; but Tommy had placed himself at the top of a steep hill, and regiment after regiment climbed that hill under fire and almost reached the top where brave Thomas stood and peppered at him, only to quaver and double-up, out of breath and demoralised, and to turn and run at the last moment.

Among the Russian troops engaged, on that memorable 5th of November, in giving Tommy Atkins his innings at Inkermann was a certain regiment known as the Okhotsk, in which regiment one Alexander Philipof enjoyed the rank of captain. The Okhotsk had, during the early part of the day, attempted more than once to climb the steep ascent at the crest of which was the British position, and, like the rest of those who made the attempt, had been beaten back with loss, unable to withstand the energetic reception that Mr Atkins was ever ready to offer to all visitors from below. Shortly before midday a column of the Okhotsk had just retreated pell-mell down the hill for the third time and the officers were busy redressing the ranks and haranguing the men in preparation for a fourth attempt. This was a column of close upon one thousand men, and these had succumbed, when near the top, to a determined charge of one hundred and twenty soldiers of the Guards, who, finding that the Russians had approached rather closer to their position than they considered advisable, had flung themselves down-hill upon the mass and overwhelmed the poor panting Russian soldiers by sheer bounce and bluffing. The Russian officers, and chief among them young Philipof, were furious, and eloquently sarcastic as they strove to awaken their men to the shame of their thrice-repeated defeat, and abuse and strong language were the order of the day. The poor Okhotsk lay or stood about, panting and puffing, and wiping the sweat from their faces; they listened to their officers but paid very little heed to their threats and abuse, for the Russian soldier is half-sheep and half-philosopher, and wild talking does not impose upon him. He is unlike sheep in that he is as brave as a man need be; but like the sheep he will follow the leader whether into danger or out of it, and if one man turns and runs it is probable that the rest will do the same; but having run away, or achieved his end, or indeed whatever may have happened, he will not be greatly disturbed, because he is a fatalist; and therefore he philosophically concludes that, it having been the will of Providence that this or that has occurred, nothing else could have happened, and therefore it is unnecessary to be either elated or discouraged or any otherwise than perfectly calm and contented.

On this occasion Captain Philipof certainly did his best to startle his sweating, panting philosophers into renewed energy and a sense of shame. He had done his utmost to save the column from the humiliation of retreat. He had sworn at and

even struck the men of his own company at the first indication of a desire to run, but all in vain ; and as he now stood upon a mound, drawn sword in hand, abusing and haranguing his men preparatory to forming line for a new attack, he was a very angry person indeed, and doubtless used language which he would have been ashamed to own to in moments of calm.

'Now, listen, you sons of dogs !' he shouted. 'The column will immediately receive orders to renew the attack. Let the others do as they please, but my *sotnia* (hundred) shall not turn tail again before these beggarly English. I swear to you that the first coward who turns and runs this time shall have one of my revolver bullets to carry down hill with him. You know me, sons of dogs that you are ; I shall do what I say. I can hit a man as well as most !' As a matter of fact Philipof was an extremely good shot with his revolver, and the men knew it.

A very few moments after this threat had left the angry captain's lips, orders came for the column to start once again upon its fatal up-hill journey. Away it went, colours fluttering ; men singing their stirring songs as only the Russian soldiers can sing them ; and a huge *ikon* held aloft in the midst by way of benediction upon the effort about to be made. Up the hill it went, a determined-looking host and formidable withal ; up the hill and into view of our brave guardsmen, who greeted it, as usual, with much cheering and with a murderous fire from such of their rifles as had anything in them, most of the ammunition having been used up before this.

This time the brave Okhotsk would take no denial, but came steadily on and on in spite of the fire, on and upwards until the head of the huge column had reached within a very few yards of our plucky little band of guardsmen. These latter, receiving no support from behind, and having burned most of their powder, began slowly to lose ground, contesting every inch of it, however ; those who had thrown down their useless rifles fighting like Homeric heroes with stones and bits of rock and anything they could lay hands upon. It was just at this critical moment that the noise of cheering and the tramp of footsteps from the rear indicated to the struggling guardsmen engaged with the enemy that assistance was at hand, and that others would arrive in a moment to share the glory of turning this big Russian column, and sending it flying down the hill after its predecessors. This, Tommy Atkins felt, would never do ; inspirited by the knowledge that support was near in case of absolute need, and at the same time determined if possible to do without it, the brave defenders pulled themselves together. 'Charge again, boys !' some one bawled, and grasping sword or bayonet more tightly and setting teeth and muscle, these tough fellows sprang forward once more full in the face of the advancing Russians, and in a moment the little band was in and among the writhing masses of the Muscovite column, stabbing, striking, firing, cheering, and in many cases fighting with their fists only.

As seemed the rule on this extraordinary day, the huge mass was unable to withstand the spirited attack of the few ; it tottered, wavered a moment, then broke and fled down-hill.

Many of the English soldiers did not fail to

notice the conduct of one handsome Russian officer ; indeed, so frantic was this individual and so energetic in trying to keep his men up to the mark, that his behaviour caused a good deal of laughter among the light-hearted Britons. This officer—who seemed half-mad with excitement—was, as some one expressed it, for all the world like a *Jack-in-the-box*, simultaneously here and there and everywhere, alternately swearing at and entreating his men to be firm, threatening them with sword and pistol, shouting, waving his arms and his sword, laughing and crying in turns. This was Alexander Philipof, who appeared to wear a charmed life, exposing himself a hundred times to the enemy's bullets without receiving hurt or harm. Possibly his excitement so amused Mr Atkins that the latter forgot to shoot him down. At any rate Philipof waved his arms and shouted himself hoarse with impunity. 'Now, Okhotsk ! Now, Okhotsk !' he yelled : 'the Tsar's sons are watching us—down with the English dogs—forward !'

The idea of the Tsar's sons watching from below had probably been dinned into the ears of the poor puffing Russian soldiers all day ; nevertheless, their presence did not avail to win the fight for their imperial father. On the contrary, no sooner had Philipof mentioned the Tsar's sons, and the necessity to show a bold front in consideration of the presence of their imperial highnesses, than the column showed unmistakable signs of breaking, as it had broken three times already this day. First one man turned, then another, then half-a-dozen, then the rest, and in a moment the column was in retreat.

The first offender was a big black-browed, white-faced fellow, a typical Russian soldier to look at, expressionless and dirty, but lowering savagely when angered. This man had suddenly thrown down his musket, spat—à la Russe—towards the British lines, and then turned and started off at a trot down-hill, the rest following him.

But the offender had not proceeded more than a couple of yards when Alexander Philipof's bullet whizzed through his cheek, and with a fearful oath he brought up.

'You dog !' yelled the officer, frantic with rage, 'like a dog you shall die ! Okhotsk, be men ! stand firm with me !' So saying, Philipof fired a second shot at the coward, not waiting, however, to note its effect, and facing quickly round, discharged the remaining bullets of his revolver into the advancing English ranks. A few of those who had begun to fall back faced about when he did, and formed in line with Philipof, while the man whom he had wounded sat, or fell down in his place swearing and bleeding, and looking in his rage like a very demon.

On came the cheering, fighting British ; and one of the first to be struck down was Philipof, who received a pretty severe wound. Of the few who had stood firm with him there was not one who was not wounded or taken prisoner ; and among those taken was the dark-visaged private, who with the rest was sent to the rear, and attended to in the Balaklava field-hospital, where, to the amusement of the British surgeons, he appeared to care nothing whatever for his own wound, or for their probing and dressing of it, his whole attention being obviously devoted to the

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case of one of his officers who was treated in the same tent, and was very much more severely wounded than himself. From this officer's face the wounded private never once took his eyes, even while his own hurt was being dressed, but only glared and muttered in a way that surprised and amused his kind attendants, who were pleased to observe the devotion of the Russian soldiery to their officers, but a little astonished at their way of showing it.

'He seems precious angry about something,' remarked Headley, a young army surgeon; 'I suppose he's riled that our fellows wounded his favourite officer: thinks nothing of this hole in his face, which must be painful enough too!'

'Very pretty devotion, I call it,' said Briggs, his senior; 'see they're put in the same tent, Headley, if the fellow is so fond of his officer. What a mug though, eh? Glad he's not fond of me—I should be afraid he'd want to eat me!'

And so it happened that wounded Philipof was placed in the same ward with Petka Gorbunof, private of his own regiment, the hole in whose cheeks had been drilled by Philipof's own bullet. There was a third Russian in the same tent, an old sergeant who had stood by Philipof when that officer rallied a few of his men, preferring death to repeated scuttling. This patriarchal old soldier was not very severely wounded, though the knock on the head from the butt of a British rifle which floored him had left his wits somewhat muddled. What remained of his intelligence, however, sufficed to fill old Anton's faithful heart with satisfaction when he realised that he was to be left in company of his favourite captain, Philipof, who was a great friend of his, and to see whom so sorely smitten was a grief to the old man.

Petka Gorbunof, or 'Black Petka' as he was called by his fellow-soldiers, was glad also to be quartered with his captain; but then he was animated by other motives than affection for Philipof and the desire to see him through his troubles. Briggs and Headley had made a little mistake as to this!

COMMON CARNIVOROUS PLANTS.

SCATTERED over the moors of Scotland, and of many parts of England, and again over many of the sandy dunes lying low close to the sea, those barren stretches which are the delight and home of the golfer, thousands of small plants may be seen, nestling snugly amid the mosses and grass close to the soil. In spring little points of light green can be observed pushing through the earth, and gradually expanding into rosettes of eight to twelve pointed leaves, of which the older and outer ones are in close contact with the ground, the inner and younger pointed upwards. Towards the end of May a slender flower-stalk rises from the centre of the rosette crowned with a small violet flower, of a graceful shape, and bearing a posterior spur.

If you were to pull up one of these plants—they are called the Common Butterworts—and to look more closely at the leaves, you would see that they were velvety in appearance, and if held so that the sunlight fell on them obliquely, covered with hundreds of small glistening points. With the aid of an

ordinary magnifying glass the appearance presented by the surface of the leaf is remarkably beautiful. Through the glass, too, each glistening point can be seen to be a minute drop of fluid resting on the top of a short projecting portion of the leaf. These little projections may be readily divided into two classes, the one with short stalks and small heads, the other, not nearly so numerous, with larger heads supported on longer pedicels. Both classes are, in reality, small glands.

If you have sufficient leisure and are interested in these wonderful little plants, an examination of a number of them, as they are growing in the soil, will repay you. If you examine, say twenty plants, you will probably find that quite a half of them, if not more, have small dead insects or particles of pollen adhering to their leaves.

They are, in fact, plants which have adapted themselves through the course of long ages for the purpose of supplementing the scanty nourishment afforded by the peaty or sandy soil on which they grow, by extracting from the bodies of insects or from the grains of pollen entangled in the drops of secretion, the additional food required. They can grow and reach maturity when such additional food is kept from them, but they wax stronger and are more fruitful when they can manage to procure it. The reason why they have developed the power of thus extracting nourishment from insects, a power very unlike that possessed by most vegetables, seems to be explained by the poorness of the soil which is their usual habitation. All living things require a certain proportion of the element nitrogen in their food; and the same phenomenon occurs in the butterworts when they obtain bodies containing that element from insects, as when a farmer reaps an increased harvest of wheat after adding nitrates or sulphate of ammonia to the soil. Peaty, boggy, or sandy soils are deficient in substances yielding nitrogen, and Nature has taught such plants as the butterwort how to obtain it in another way.

As you continue to walk over the moorland at some of the moister spots, especially those covered with mosses, you may be fortunate enough to come across another small plant, smaller even than the butterwort. It is not so widely spread over the moorland, but generally grows in colonies in the damper spots. This little plant is not at first at all easy of identification. If one is found, however, you may be sure that others are close at hand. Close down on the ground a small star-shaped plant is seen. Its leaves are arranged similarly to those of the butterwort, but here the resemblance ceases; for most people if shown a single leaf would think it a flower. At the end of a slender leaf-stalk a circular, thin blade is placed, bearing numerous tentacles of a bright red colour, those in the centre of the leaf being short and set vertically, those nearer and at the margins longer and directed outwards. The expanded portion of the leaf has been aptly compared to a flat, circular pincushion, stuck full of pins. Each of these tentacles is capped with a drop of sticky fluid, which glistens in the sun, and from which the plant derives its name of Sundew. A little later in the year than the butterwort the sundew develops a flower-stalk from the centre of its leaf-star, bearing a number

of small violet flowers arranged around the upper part. It is easy to overlook the sundew. It is not light green in colour amongst darker plants and heather, like the butterwort, but is often hid amidst mosses which possess the same reddish tinge as it does. And the common sundew is very small, rarely more than two inches in diameter from tip to tip of the leaves, though under favourable circumstances it may attain a larger size.

If a number of plants be examined, most of them will be found to have caught one or two insects in the sticky fluid at the ends of their tentacles. They have acquired the same power of supplementing their supply of nitrogen as the butterworts.

The thought which naturally arises is, 'How do these plants make use of their captured prey?' At one time it was suggested that the presence of the power of digestion outside the tissues of the body was only possessed by animals, and served to distinguish animal from vegetable forms. But both these plants secrete a digestive fluid, act on albumins outside of their tissues, and, what is more, reject the indigestible remains. Indeed they may be said to be in advance even of man in so far as they refuse to secrete an active juice when fed with bodies which are useless to them, while the introduction of such substances into the stomach of man is followed by a flow, more or less great, of active juice. When a small insect lights on a leaf of either of these plants, attracted by the light green of the butterwort, the red of the sundew, or by the glistening drops on their surfaces, certain changes are brought about. Caught by the sticky fluid, the insect struggles to free itself, but only succeeds in immersing itself more thoroughly, and, by its movements in irritating the glands of the leaf, causing a more copious flow of the secretion. In the butterwort it is soon drowned in the fluid poured out by those glands which actually touch it, while the edge of the leaf of the side on which it has lit becomes gradually curved in towards the middle, and, if the insect be not too near the centre of the leaf, reaches over it. By this manœuvre the plant is enabled to bring a second set of glands in contact with its prey, and thus to facilitate digestion. If the leaf be watched under a magnifying glass during the process, no movement of the glands themselves can be seen. The bent-in edge of the leaf gradually returns to its normal position after some hours.

The mechanism provided for the capture of prey in the *Drosera* is still more complicated and delicate. In it the tentacles, each of them surrounded by a gland, move in towards the insect.

If a plant of the sundew be dug up with its roots and placed in an earthenware saucer in the midst of damp moss, it will live for some time, though in town it soon becomes covered with particles of dust and soot adhering to its sticky secretion. The movements of the tentacles can then be easily observed through a glass. If a small fly or a minute particle of white of egg be carefully placed on one side of a leaf, the drops of fluid at the ends of the glands touched by it grow larger, and in a little the drops on the tentacles close by. In a few seconds the longer tentacles on which the fly rests begin to move slowly into the centre, arching their stems until

the terminal glands bearing the fly reach the ends of the shorter central tentacles. In a brief space of time after the tentacles in actual contact with the fly have begun to move, those adjoining arch inwards in a similar manner, bending down their tips towards the spot where the fly will ultimately rest. Gradually more and more of the tentacles bow down their heads to this spot, and, if the fly be larger than usual, every one may be so bent in. The leaf, like a pincushion before, now resembles a closed fist.

After a longer or shorter time, when the nutritious substances have been extracted from the prey, the tentacles slowly regain their former positions. If two flies be placed, one on one side, the second on the opposite side of a leaf, the tentacles of the corresponding sides bend in towards the imprisoned insects.

It is hard to believe, while watching the unerring accuracy with which each tentacle of the sundew directs its terminal gland to the object caught, that it is not a sentient being whose movements are directed by some central nervous system, but only a humble plant endowed during the struggle for existence with powers of movement and judgment far surpassing in delicacy those possessed by many of the higher animals.

The mechanism employed by the sundew is more complicated than that in the butterwort, in that parts not in contact with the prey secrete an active juice, while the curling in of the edges of the butterwort leaf is a comparatively clumsy proceeding compared with the incurving of the sundew's tentacles.

The drops of fluid which cover the tips of the tentacles serve not only to entangle the prey, but to digest it after capture. At present, however, before the capture of an insect it has no digestive power. Soon after the capture it becomes acid, contains a digestive ferment, and can digest albumins rapidly. The acid secreted is probably formic acid, an organic acid also found in the secretions of the ant.

So far we have only alluded to the actions of these plants when bodies containing substances useful for them have been entrapped. Almost more wonderful is their behaviour when bodies which do not contain the nitrogen they are in search of come in contact with their leaves. If small fragments of glass, or a drop of a solution of starch in water, be placed on the leaves, the glands at once recognise the futility of attempting to digest them, and fail to secrete more fluid. But though secretion fails, the actual movements of the leaves persist. The edge of the butterwort leaf curves in slightly; the tentacle of the sundew conveys the body towards the centre. Darwin observed marked incurvation of a tentacle of the sundew after a fragment of human hair weighing only one 78,740th of a grain had been placed on it. The most sensitive part of the human skin can only recognise a weight of one 66th of a grain.

Albumin is split up by these plants into the same bodies as are formed from it in the human stomach, and these are similarly absorbed into the tissues of the leaves. They suffer from the evil effects of a surfeit just as we do. If you were to place a large bit of white of egg on one of the sundew's leaves, it would make an heroic attempt to digest it all, but the leaf would

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shortly wither and die. In the same way, if a small portion of peptone derived from the artificial digestion of albumin be given, it is so quickly absorbed that the part of the leaf on which it was placed dies within thirty-six hours.

Many who have tried to cultivate these plants indoors, and have thought to treat them kindly by supplying them with bits of meat and white of egg, have often had to deplore their early death from over-feeding. When kept in the house, or under glass, they should only be given a minute particle of raw meat or hard-boiled white of egg once a week, and care should be taken not to place this on the same leaf on each occasion. A leaf always takes some time to recover its active power after each digestive act.

An observation lately made on the powers of selection of these plants as regards substances derived from albumin and containing nitrogen, but of a much simpler composition than peptone, shows that they are unable to make use of this nitrogen in most instances—generally where the body is one derived from animals—although one of this class, which bears the name of asparagin, and which is a common constituent of plants, affords them the nitrogen they are in need of.

Both the butterwort and the sundew are widely distributed over northern Europe and the mountainous districts farther south. The Laplanders long ago found out that the butterwort contains a body which acts on milk like rennet, and used it to form 'tātniolk,' a substance resembling our junket, by pouring milk fresh from the cow over its leaves. In virtue of the acid contained in its secretion, its juice is antiseptic, another property which was discovered by the shepherds of the Alps, who anticipated the advent of antiseptic surgery when they used the leaves as a local application to sores on the udders of their cows.

Other members of these two families of plants grow in this country, but the two mentioned are by far the most common.

In Canada, Venus's Fly-trap is adapted for the capture of insects in perhaps a more wonderful way than even the sundew. The merest touch of an insect on one half of its divided leaf serves to cause almost instantaneous closure, with the consequent imprisonment of the unwary intruder between the two halves of the leaf.

Space forbids more than a mere mention of the numerous pitcher-plants and bladderworts, some of which digest the insects entrapped by their hollow chambers through the agency of active secretions, while others do no more than absorb the products of the decomposition of their victims, and possess no power of actual digestion.

That humble plants such as these should be able to perform acts as complex as those in mammals, with a much simpler apparatus, is a fact which must raise elements of wonder in our minds. That they carry out digestion of albumins in public, so to speak, and not in hidden cavities in the body as we do, renders them of unusual interest to all, because in them we can watch the progress of digestion similar to that in man, and can fathom some of the problems unascertainable so directly in any other way.

The butterwort and the sundew are so common and so easily obtainable that any one who cares to watch their actions personally may do so at

little trouble to himself. The plants, an earthenware saucer filled with moss and kept damp, a good magnifying glass, and a little care in feeding them, are all that he requires.

THE NOBLE FIVE.

A TALE OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA GOLD MINES.

III.

I HAD come down from the Little Joker Claim, leaving Blind Tom at our cabin, because the assessments for the year were finished, and I wanted to let off steam; but somehow while Miss Innes was at Warm Springs Camp I lost all interest in whisky. People only get drunk for lack of better amusement; besides, this sort of thing is bad form nowadays, and resented by decent women. The mere meeting with a well-bred girl reminded me of matters which do not belong to a mining camp, so instead of hanging about the saloons I used to sit under the trees on the Point, thinking of days long past, of school, Oxford, home—especially of home. I even wrote a letter, a thing I had not done before since I became Jack Robinson, *vice* somebody else deceased.

When the reply came, and was stuck up in the post-office window to be claimed, its address made me feel rather awkward. I claimed it to re-address for a friend, sending off the envelope goodness knows where, with a piece of blank paper inside. After that I swore off writing letters.

Well, to get back to my story. Four weeks I spent at Ainsworth doing nothing much, to the wonder of all the boys in camp. I must say I behaved beautifully, spent nearly all I possessed in a suit of slops at the store, invested my last four dollars in the cheapest of bacon and flour, got down my spare tent from the mountain, pitched it in the Point, and lived so decorously that the folks who dwelt in the upper shanty cut me dead.

Miss Innes would come down to sketch on the Point, mainly I think because the Colonel was too attentive, and she naturally wanted to get away from him. A nuisance over fifty years of age is beyond endurance; but yet she seemed to take the liveliest interest in his movements, and was sure to know every day what claims he had gone to visit in the camp.

She used to draw me out, to make me talk about myself, about the crowd, or any topic except her own sweet reticent self. If she cared to tell me why she was in Kootenay, or what she wanted with the mysterious Mr Swainson, she would do so without the help of leading questions, but at the end of a week I had found out as much of her private affairs as she wished me to know—which was exactly nothing. For all practical purposes it was enough to me that she sat caricaturing the mountains day after day, with the sun touching gold in her brown hair and the lake casting a deeper blue into her sweet blue eyes. Once when I asked if she had heard of Mr Swainson yet, she said she could not think who I was talking of—'Mr Swainson?'

'Yes, the man you came here to find.'

'Oh!' said Miss Innes, 'surely it's dinner-time?'

Sometimes she let me take her up through the

camp on horseback, when she would express the liveliest interest in any claims which the Colonel had told her about, though she yawned lamentably over the rest. She asked imbecile young lady questions, only to startle me at intervals with some accidental word such as only a prospector would know.

'So this is the "foot wall" and this is the "hanging wall"? How interesting! And is that what you call "country rock" between them?'

'No, Miss Innes; that's four feet of good sulphurites.'

'Oh, I see. Then, why do they still mess about on the "cap"?'

'Because they don't know what's good for them.'

'They should prospect from under that bluff,' said Miss Innes indignantly. 'Why, with fifty feet of tunnelling, they'd have a saleable position!'

I'm afraid that I stared hard. How did this young woman, fresh from England, learn the slang of prospecting? But this was more than slang, it was real practical knowledge of mining, a suggestion that I had made to the owners myself some months ago.

However, this mystery was hers and no business of mine. Moreover, she was blushing hotly at having so far forgotten her rôle of novice. I began to talk of the weather while I helped her into the saddle. Then we rode on.

'Mr Robinson,' she said, no longer trying to hide her embarrassment, 'I forgot myself. It's no use trying to pretend any more. I've been a good deal among these silver camps; but you won't betray me, will you?'

'I am your servant, Miss Innes, in everything; but you must take great care or you will betray yourself to the whole camp.'

After she had once admitted her knowledge of mining, we talked together like two prospectors of true fissure veins, of contacts, leads, and rock, of tunnel, shaft, and winze; for on all these things her information was almost uncanny.

I have known a great many women, and loved them too; but Miss Innes—of course I do not give her real name—was the only girl I ever met who could be a chum and a jolly good fellow. She was not the less womanly, never let a chap forget to respect her; but once away from Ainsworth, there was not the slightest trace about this girl of the feminine nonsense which men are supposed to like.

She had made me promise that day to take her to the Little Joker claim in which Blind Tom and I were partners. Wonderful stories Tom could tell if he chose, he being the pioneer of Warm Springs camp; indeed, I had bet her a pair of gloves to nothing that she would fail even to open his mouth. The tale of the Noble Five was a mystery. Tom alone could tell it; but though all of us wanted to know what really happened, it was an understood thing that the man who questioned my partner would get little satisfaction for his pains.

'You let me try,' said Miss Innes.

So at noon we unsaddled at the Little Joker, and while Tom washed and changed in the cabin, I showed Miss Innes all there was to be seen in cut and tunnel. Then I cooked the dinner while she sat resting in the doorway, and Tom, too

shy as yet even to speak, pretended no end of business on the claim.

I had never noticed before how dirty everything was, the log walls hung with cooking-pots and clothes, the bunk littered with grimy blankets, the sheet-iron stove all rust and grease in its box of gravel. She seemed to like the place, especially the tables and the three-legged stools, rough-hewn with an axe, the gold-pans which we used for baking bread, the litter of rock, pipes, candles, books, heaped up in the window-ledges.

'It looks so real,' she said, 'everything for good hard use, nothing for show. And yet, I'm sure this log-cabin is prettier than half our pernickety houses. Look at the sun outside there on those pines, and the big deep shadows in the tunnel. There's Blind Tom messing about picking up bits of native silver for me. What a huge man he is! Do you think he'll tell me the story after dinner?'

'I doubt it.'

I poured off the water in which I had been parboiling the bacon, set the pan on the stove, then looked about. It had seemed commonplace enough, this log-hut in the woods, the prospect-hole in the mountain-side hard by; but now that I looked with her eyes, from her point of view, the place was translated into a mislaid corner of paradise.

'It's you,' I said; 'you've changed prospecting into poetry, and silver-mining into romance. You're changing Blind Tom and me into knights-errant. Beware, Miss Innes, or you'll find yourself set on a throne as Queen of Beauty.'

This by the way is not quite what I said, but what I thought of afterwards when it was too late.

Then Tom came in very awkward, and we sat down to dinner. Somehow with feminine witchery she thawed him out, made him at ease in five minutes, got him to talk of the claim, of other prospect-holes, of the camp in general, and at last of the new discoveries of the past few months, the great camps on Trail Creek, Slocan, and Kaslo, which in those days could scarcely boast a tent where there are cities now.

It seems very curious looking back over five years at Blind Tom feeling with a fork in his short-sighted way for scraps of bacon which he mistook for beans, at Miss Innes chattering away perfectly contented with our tin plates and rough camp-fare, then at myself just in the act of realising that I was once more hopelessly in love.

But in those days Kootenay was a new country which had only begun to dream of its great destiny as one of the richest mining-fields in the world; and we, two prospectors who could not get credit for a sack of flour, were entertaining an angel unawares. We are rich now in lands, in big mines, in shares fetching thirty per cent. dividends, but we were happier then.

IV.

Tom was filling his pipe when I came back after dinner, for I had been away to water the horses. One glance at Miss Innes showed me that she had taken all possible advantage of my absence. Tom in his own good time would tell the story of the Noble Five.

'Come,' said I, 'let's sit down under the stoop, here where it's shady.'

So I placed a large box against the front wall for our guest, took a stump for myself, and watched Tom settle himself on the doorstep.

'I dunno,' he said, 'that I'd ought to tell you horrors.' That from Tom was the refusal provocative; but perhaps we both wanted to hear Miss Innes plead with all a woman's burning curiosity.

'Well,' Tom began to get under way with slow deliberation, 'there was five of us prospecting along this country: Arkansaw George, Bill Quiddicks, as had a gammy leg, Mick, who was Fenian Irish, Bloody Ike—if you'll excuse his name, being a lady—and me, Blind Tom, what was said to be no good except for cooking.

'That was three years ago come April, which was early, considering as we'd have no truck with any ground down here on the low slope; and we was prospecting around the flanks of the snow, feeling mighty despondent. Bloody Ike made out we'd ought to prospect along by the lake, Mick he was for some crazy course up in the snow because we'd get easier travelling, while Bill Quiddicks and me was content to do just what Arkansaw thought good and right, he being the best man of the crowd. The result was argument, in which two or three of us got black eyes, and after that we begun to feel better. Mick went prospecting the snow-fields on his own account, but what he found that time was a badly broken leg all to himself.

'The rest of us ranged around promiscuous-like, and everywhere we saw float; but it seemed that nothing would suit us. We'd found one of the biggest silver camps on earth, and cursed our luck because it wasn't gold. All these claims, the Skyline, the Krao, Number One, the four Gallaghers, the Spokane, Trinket, and most of the Sunlight Belt, including the Neosho, were our discoveries, but we turned up our royal noses and didn't take the trouble to stake them out because the price of silver was beginning to fall. We wanted gold. And all that time, while we was humbugging around the mountain, with nothing to eat but an occasional deer, there lay that Irishman in camp dying by inches of gangrene 'cause his leg was smashed. He called us all the names he could lay his tongue to, did Mick, and as to us—why, we nursed him all we knew. Arkansaw Bill was away south to get him medicine, which he couldn't buy this side of the United States boundary, and when he was coming back he got himself drowned trying to swim the Kootenay. So there was Ike, and Bill Quiddicks, and me nursing the Irishman, too heart-sick to prospect except for meat, and the Irishman calling us all sorts of fools for our pains.

'At last, when he'd got so low he could scarcely speak, he calls us around him. "Begorra," says he, "you ain't no prospectors. Here you've been four weeks afoolin' round among blind leads where you didn't find nothin', every mother's son of ye, when the pure red gould is right up yon hill where I'd told you. Look a here," says he, and he picks out a bit of rock which was hid away under his blanket; "here's what I found, rootin' round in the ashes of the fire. Phwat div ye call that, eh?"

'We licked at it, each of us, with our tongues,

we peered at it through the glass, we took the feel with our knives, then passed it on to the next man, hoping as how he'd take the responsibility of speaking.

"Div ye call yerselves prospectors?" says Mick.

"Never any more, so help me Bob," says Ike.

"Never no more," says Bill Quiddicks, as had the gammy leg.

"Never no more," says I.

"Then I puts the name to it," says Mick. "I puts the name to it—and calls it chloride, which the same was smelted accidental in yon camp-fire, and came out native gold."

"Why didn't you let on before?" says Ike.

"'Cause," says Mick, "you've been despisin' me all along for seeking the high ground in the snow. This 'ere float came a rolling down last week—down off the hillside wid a rubble of stuff that thawed off from under some clift," says he: "this claim up the hill is what I've found, and what I names the Noble Five prospeck, after four fools and one man as is dyin' afore sundown.

"And now," says he, very low, "will yez do as I tells ye now I'm leader av this outfit?"

"We will," says Ike, but Bill Quiddicks and me we both swore to it. "Then," says the Irishman, "ye'll make a coffin, and ye'll make a birch canoe; ye'll take my body to the head of the lake, then up to Bonner's Ferry, then overland to Kootenay Station, and then by the Northern Pacific Railway to Spokane Falls, then ye'll take my body to my mother as lives in Fourth Avenue. If yez fail in that, my curse be on you."

'For an hour he lay still, with us waiting beside him for the end; but when the sun was red and we thinking, I guess about supper, he opens his eyes, and says we'd got to pray for him. I couldn't pray; Bill Quiddicks he could only pray Methodist; but Bloody Ike, he was a Roman Catholic, so he prayed in Latin. When that was finished the Irishman was dead, so Bloody Ike went about in the dusk making torches. He planted them torches, one at Mick's feet, one at his head; he lit them from the camp-fire, which was burned down to white ash, then he told us to go away and not chaff while he said some more prayers.'

Blind Tom rammed his finger into his pipe and put it out, then he looked away among the trees while the sun gleamed sideways on his goggles. Miss Innes wiped her eyes with a handkerchief. I sat wondering why Tom should tell that yarn which never before would he speak of to me or any man living. Then Tom went on without warning:

'We tossed up which two of us should go with the body to the Irishman's mother, and the choice fell upon me to stay behind prospecting for this gold mine which was to be called the Noble Five. We made the coffin, sealed up tight with pitch; we made the birch canoe down there at the Point where Ainsworth is standing now. Then we put the coffin into the canoe; and again we tossed up. Heads had it that Ike should go in the bow, Bill Quiddicks in the stern. So they shoved off, and I stood on the Point watching and watching so long as I could hear the dip of the paddles.

'You know them flurries of wind as comes down from between the mountains? Well, perhaps that accounts for what happened. Neither Bloody Ike nor Bill Quiddicks as had the gammy leg, nor the canoe nor the coffin was ever heard tell of

again. Moreover, the Irishman he was dead of gangrene, and Arkansaw Bill he was drowned trying to bring medicine from the States. It's often seemed to me that the Noble Five claim ain't lucky.'

Miss Innes looked round at him through the tail of her eye.

'So you did find the ledge?' she asked.

'I found the ledge,' said Tom, 'and it ain't no good.'

'Where is it?'

'Up the hill,' said Tom vaguely.

'Up above the "Skyline,"' said I, 'right up in the granite on the skirts of the snow.'

'I dunno why,' said Tom, 'that I told you that yarn; perhaps it was your coming to this camp with the Colonel. Is he a friend of yours, ma'am?'

'No.' She shivered.

'I don't know why he should want to buy that claim. You see I'd been to him in the hope of selling one of my wild-cats, but I ain't inclined to sell the Noble Five. However, I showed him around, and he took an option—on this here property, the Little Joker, because Jack here and me is broke. But his going on about the Noble Five makes me uneasy somehow. He ain't going to get that—cause of the men what died, which it's their monument. I'd like right well to take him away somewhere and lose him.'

Miss Innes seemed bristling with unaccountable excitement. 'Well,' she cried nervously.

'The Colonel,' said Tom, 'he's got some sort of pufleckly ligitiinate mining proposition as he calls it, which he wanted to fix up with me. I tells him to go to the devil—excuse my language, ma'am; he's tried to buy me, he's tried to bribe my partner, Jack here, but if he goes any further, he'll land himself in jail.'

Miss Innes rose, flushed, breathless, staring at Tom with unaccountable excitement.

'Don't trust him,' she cried; 'watch him; he's dangerous. I know what I'm saying. He's gone to that claim to-day!'

KNOTS AND THREADS.

We still talk of the Gordian knot and the thread of Destiny, although few of us stop to consider the meaning of words we utter so glibly. The Gordian knot was a lucky knot, fastened to the wagon of a man who from a peasant became a king, of which it was predicted that whosoever untied it should become monarch of all Asia; whilst the thread of Destiny refers to a belief of the ancients that the Moire or Fates spun a thread at the birth of every child, and upon this thread the good or evil fate, long or short life, of each individual depended. There is another knot much depicted and talked of in the last century, but which seems to have dropped out of use in our prosaic age. This, the true lover's knot, was supposed to represent the thread of destiny of two lives inextricably entangled. It might be supposed that these knots and threads were only poetic symbols; but if we examine the matter a little more closely we shall find that

all the world over, both in ancient and in modern times, knots and threads have been not only symbols, but realities, to which many magical properties and much religious superstition are attached.

In Denny's *Folklore of China* we are told that the dead are swathed in long strips of cloth, two of which must be white and one red. The ends of these strips are tied in 'an auspicious knot,' and as many of these knots are tied at various places on the body as the material used will allow. Here we get perhaps the key to the many complicated twists and knots engraved on early stone monuments, most of which are funereal, and possibly also to that widely spread custom of binding the dead with knotted cords or enclosing them in nets, so that the net came to be symbolical of death.

That the use of nets in burial is very ancient cannot be doubted, for it seems to have become a survival in Egypt at a remote period, so that many mummies are enveloped in a network of beads. Mummies in remote Alaska are found encased in network; whilst in Kentucky bodies wrapped in knotted twine mantles have been found, and many others in various parts of America bound up with knotted cords. In all these cases there is doubtless much significance attached to the knots, which, as far as can be understood, are supposed to be possessed of magical power to preserve the deceased from enemies, and especially from the machinations of witchcraft.

How very ancient is this belief in the efficacy of knots may be judged from the fact that among the Chaldeans they were used in the cure of disease.

In Berdoe's *Popular History of Medicine* many records of magical remedies are given, and among them some by knots. Thus: 'When the Babylonian god Marduk wishes to soothe the last moments of a dying man, Hea says: "Take a woman's linen kerchief, bind it round thy right hand, loose it from the left hand, knot it with seven knots; do so twice."

Naturally, magic knots could be employed for evil as well as for good; to cause sickness and death, as well as to cure disease. Hence we find that witches were supposed to have the power, by tying knots and blowing upon them, to cause illnesses of many kinds, a superstition from which Mohammed was not free, for in the Koran he writes: 'Say I fly for refuge unto the Lord of the daybreak, that he may deliver me from the mischief of those things that he hath created; and from the mischief of the night when it cometh on; and from the mischief of women blowing on knots.'

Witches, even up to the last century, were condemned to death if found with knotted cords upon their persons; and in Scotland it was supposed that, by stealing hair from the tails of cows and making a rope of the hair, tying a knot in it for each cow, they could get the milk of these cows for their own use.

The Lapps and Finns used to tie knots and sell them to mariners, that by untying these knots they might ensure favourable winds. Two they might loosen, but if they dared to untie the third a tempest would be sure to follow. It is very interesting to note the use of

knots for exactly similar purposes among the American Indians as of old in Europe. Thus we learn that among the Mexicans of the Rio Grande a lock of hair tied into knots is supposed to secure a maiden's affections; and Mr Bourke says: 'Miss Edna Dean Proctor, the poet, told me that some years ago in Illinois she met a woman who, having been ill a long time, and despairing of recovery, had consulted a man pretending to occult powers, who prescribed that she should wear next the skin a certain knotted red cord which he gave her.'

Magic knots lead necessarily to magic or sacred threads or cords, since it is obvious that a knot would acquire superior virtue from being tied in that which was already consecrated. It is a very curious fact that sacred knotted cords are worn by men of all religions in almost every part of the globe; they are generally prepared with great care of special material, and are credited with many mystic properties, but especially with that of warding off sickness or disaster.

The sacred thread of the Brahmins is well known; it is a caste distinction assumed at an early age, and never parted with. It must be made by a Brahmin, and should consist of three strands, each of a different colour, forty-eight yards in length, doubled and twisted together twice, the ends tied in knots. It must be worn next the skin over the left shoulder, hanging down to the thigh on the right side. The three castes of the Hindus are distinguished by the material of these threads—cotton for the Brahmins, hemp for the warriors, and wool for the artisans. The Parsees also wear the sacred thread, and boys of seven or nine are invested with it, the threads used being always made of fibres of the suru tree. Monier Williams describes the sacred girdle of the Parsees as made of seventy-two woollen threads, forming a flat band, which is twined three times round the body, and tied in two peculiar knots, the secret of which is only known to the Parsees.

The use of 'medicine cords' is common among North American Indians. Mr Bourke describes those worn by the Apaches. These consist of one, two, three, or four strands, to which are attached shells, feathers, beads, rock-crystal, sacred green stones, and other articles, doubtless employed symbolically.

These cords can only be made by the chief medicine men, and are consecrated with much ceremony. Mr Bourke thinks they may be connected with those mnemonic cords used by the Peruvians and Chinese; and he gives an instance of their use in this manner when a leader named Popé succeeded in throwing off the Spanish yoke. He persuaded the people that he had been directed by the spirits to make a rope of palm-leaf and tie in it a number of knots to represent the days before the rebellion was to take place; but it is evident that the magic of the knotted cord was more potent than its mnemonic properties. The four strands of the cord of the Apaches were of different colours—yellow, blue, white, and black; and the Peruvians are said to have used cords of four colours in their religious ceremonies, whilst the Aztecs cast lots with little cords knotted together.

Mr Bourke proceeds to compare the medicine cords of the American Indians with the religious cords and girdles still in use among Christians, and quotes Picard to the effect that the Roman Catholic Church condemned those who thought to give pleasure to the dead by burying with them little cords knotted with many knots. Yet the various monastic orders still tie knots in their girdles, the number of these knots being regulated according to the order; and in Abyssinia, according to Mr Bent, every Christian wears around his neck a blue cord as an emblem of his faith.

The colour of the threads superstitiously used as *medicine* is prescribed. Blue, as we have seen, is the Christian colour in Abyssinia, but that colour is considered unlucky in Scotland; and in 1635 a man in the Orkney Islands was said to have been utterly ruined by 'nine knots cast on a blue thread and given to his sister.' Red thread is prescribed as a remedy for fever and for nosebleeding, and red worsted is tied round cows' tails to preserve them from the evil eye. A 'wrested thread,' spun from black wool and cast in nine knots, is described in *Notes and Queries* as used to cure sprains. The origin of these sacred threads and knots is doubtless symbolical, denoting the subjection of the wearer to certain deities. It may not be irrelevant to quote here the passage of the Psalms in which the kings of the earth and the rulers are represented as taking counsel against the Lord and His anointed, saying: 'Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us.' The manner of wearing these cords from shoulder to hip is also symbolical of the subjection of the whole body, whilst the knots perhaps signify the unalterable nature of the bond entered into between the deity and the neophyte. Meanwhile the universality of the curious superstitions connected with knots and cords seems to throw back their origin to the childhood of the world and the cradle of the human race.

MY LORD DUKE.*

CHAPTER XX.—'LOVE THE DEBT.'

OLIVIA was not a little tired; this was the true explanation of the tears which had driven her upstairs. It was also the one excuse she saw for herself when she thought the matter over in her own room. Jack had devoted the whole morning to her; it was the squatter's turn; and, of course, Jack must invite whom he liked to stay as long as he pleased. To think of limiting his freedom in any such matter at the very outset of their engagement! Yet she had been guilty of that thought; but she was tired; she would lie down for an hour.

She lay down for two or three. Excitement had worn her out. It was after five when she awoke and went downstairs. As she did so Claude and Cripps crossed the hall and put on their hats. She hailed Claude.

'What have you done with Jack?' she asked.

'I think you'll find him in the little study at the end of the library.'

'Thanks.'

Olivia glanced at Cripps. She had never met him. She wondered who he was, and why Claude did not introduce him to her, and what made both of them so glum. They hurried out of the house as though they were afraid of her. What could it mean? She would find out from Jack; she felt a renewed right to him now, and thought of hints, as she went, for Mr Dalrymple, if they were still together. But Jack was alone; he was sitting in the dejected attitude engendered by a peculiarly long and low arm-chair.

'Well?' said Olivia briskly.

'Well?' responded Jack; but he looked at her without rising and without a smile; and both omissions were unlike the man.

'I half expected to find Mr Dalrymple with you. I'm so glad he isn't! I—it's my turn, I think!'

'I haven't seen Dalrymple for over an hour,' said Jack, with his heavy, absent eyes upon her all the time. 'I wonder where he is?'

Olivia would not ask him what the matter was; she preferred to find out for herself, and then tell him. She looked about her. On a salver were a decanter and three wine glasses; one was unused; and on the floor there lay an end of pink tape. She picked and held it up between finger and thumb.

'Lawyers!' she cried.

'Yes, I've had a solicitor here.'

'Not to make your will?'

'No. On a—on a local matter. Don't look at me like that! It's nothing much: nothing new, at all events.'

'But you are worried!'

She knelt beside his chair, and rested her elbows on the arm, studying his pale set profile. His eyes met hers no longer.

'I am,' he admitted; 'but that's my own fault. It's not worth it. And it's nothing new.'

'Who was the lawyer?'

'You wouldn't know him.'

'I mean to know who he was. Mr Cripps?'

Jack did not answer. He rolled his head from side to side against the back of the chair. His eyes remained fast upon the opposite wall.

'It is—the old trouble,' Olivia whispered. 'The trouble of two nights ago!'

His silence told her much. The drops upon his forehead added more. But her voice was calm and undismayed; it enabled him at last to use his own.

'Yes!' he said hoarsely. 'Claude made a mistake. It was true after all!'

'Hunt's story, darling?'

'Hunt's story. There was an English marriage as well as an Australian one. He had a wife at each side of the world! Claude made a mistake. He went to the wrong church at Chelsea—to a church by the river. He had always thought it was the parish church. It is not. St Luke's is the parish church, and there in the book they have the marriage down in black and white. Cripps found it; but he first found it somewhere else, where he says they have the records of every

marriage in the country since 1850. He would have looked there the day Claude was up, but he left it too late. He looked yesterday, and found it, sure enough, on the date Hunt gave. October 22d, 1853. And he went to Chelsea and saw it there. So there's no mistake about it this time; and you see how we stand.'

'I see. My poor boy!'

'It's Claude after all. Poor chap, he's awfully cut up. He blames himself so for the mistake between the two churches; but Cripps tells me it was the most natural mistake in the world. Chelsea Old Church—that was where Claude went. And he says he'll never forgive himself.'

'But I forgive him,' said Olivia, with the first sign of emotion in her voice. She was holding one of his hands; her other was in his hair; but still he stared straight in front of him.

'Of course you forgive him,' he said gently. 'When you come to think of it, there's nothing to forgive. Claude didn't make the facts. He only failed to discover them.'

'I am glad he *did* fail,' whispered Olivia.

'Glad? You can't be glad! Why do you say that?'

And now he turned his face to her, in his astonishment; and suddenly it was she who could not meet his gaze.

'How can you be glad?' he continued to demand.

'Because—otherwise—you would never—have—spoken!—'

'Spoken? Of course I shouldn't! It's a thousand pities I did. It makes it all the harder now!'

'What do you mean?'

'Surely you see?'

They had risen with a common instinct. The ice was broken; there were no more shamefaced glances. The girl stood proudly at her full height.

'I see nothing. You say our engagement makes this all the harder for you; it *should* be just the opposite.'

'Will nothing make you see?' cried Jack. 'Oh, how am I to say it? It—it can't go on—our engagement!'

'And why not?'

'I am nothing—nobody—a nameless!—'

'What does it matter?' interrupted Olivia passionately. 'Do you really think it was the name I wanted after all? You pay me a high compliment! I know exactly what you mean—know exactly what this means to you. To me it makes no difference at all. You are the man you have always been; you are the man—I love.'

His eyes glistened.

'God bless you for saying so! You are the one to love a man the better when he's down on his luck. I know that. Yet we must never—'

'Never what?'

'Marry!'

'Not—marry?' She stared at him in sheer incredulity. 'Not when we promised—only yesterday? You may break your word if you like; mine I would never break!'

'Then I must. It is not to be thought of any more. Surely you see? It is not that I have lost the money and the title; oh! you must see what it is!'

'Of course I see. But I don't allow the objection.'

'Your people would never hear of it now; and quite right too!'

'My people! I am of age. I have a little money of my own, enough for us both. I can do exactly what I like. Besides, I'm not so sure about my people; you don't know my father as I know him.'

'He is a man of the world. He would not hear of it.'

'Then I must act for myself.'

'You must not!'

'I must. Do you think I am only a fair-weather girl? I gave you my promise when all was different; I would rather die—than break it now.'

'But I release you! I set you free! Everything has altered. Oh, can't you put yourself in my place? I should deserve to be shot if I married you now. I release you because I must.'

'And I refuse to be released.'

They regarded one another with hopeless faces. Their eyes were dim with love—yet here they stood apart. This was the dead-lock. Nothing could come of this contest of honour against honour, of one unselfish love against another. It was like striking flint upon flint, and steel upon steel. A gong sounded in the distance; it was the signal to dress for dinner. Olivia beat the floor impatiently with one foot; her lips trembled; her eyes filled with tears.

'If you cared for me,' she cried passionately, 'half as much as you said you did, you wouldn't be so ready to lose me now!'

'If I cared less,' he answered, 'I would take you at your word—God knows how you tempt me to!—and you should be my wife. I would mind less how I dragged you down—what became of us in the end. But I love you too well to spoil your life. Don't you know that, Olivia?'

'Ah yes! I know it! I know—I know!—'

She tottered, and he took her in his arms. He was shaking all over. Her head lay back upon his shoulder. He smoothed the hair from the high white forehead; he looked tenderly and long into the wild wet eyes. His arm tightened about her; he could not help it.

'Sweetheart,' he whispered, 'you must help me to be strong. It is hard enough as it is. Only help me, or it will be far harder. Help me now—at dinner! I am going to take the head of the table for the last time. Help me by being bright! We can talk afterwards. There is time enough. Only help me now!'

'I will do my best,' she whispered, disengaging herself from his trembling arms. 'I will try to be as brave as you. Oh, there is no one in the world like you! Yes, do let us talk about it afterwards. There is so much to say and to decide. But I give you fair warning: I shall never—never—never—let you go. Darling, you will need me now! And I cannot give you up—much less after this—shall I tell you why? You have gone the wrong way to work; you have made me love you more than ever—my hero—my darling—my all!'

She stood a moment at the open door, kissing her hand to him—rosy flush upon her face—the great tears standing in her eyes. Then she was gone. He watched her down the length of the

library; the stained windows dappled her, as she passed, with rubies and sapphires, huge and watery; at the farther door she turned, and kissed her hand again—and fled.

FOREIGNERS IN ARGENTINA.

In discussing the general position of Europeans in the River Plate Republics, we shall leave out of consideration the 'gallego' or pure Spaniard as having had little to do with the progress of those countries, and being a race by no means idolised by the natives. Only a little higher than the 'gallego' ranks the 'gringo,' the name applied to all other foreigners as conveying a subtle sense of contempt and inferiority. Those who are acquainted with the general type of Spaniard who goes forth to seek his fortune in the old colonies of his country will readily understand the low estimation in which his countrymen are held by the present inhabitants; but why Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Italians should be viewed with scarcely less dislike seems somewhat strange. But on looking into the question as affecting Argentina we find that this hostile feeling is due to two causes: firstly, tradition, and secondly, to a constantly increasing jealousy of those who are developing the country in a manner of which the native population is incapable. As regards tradition we will deal briefly. In the first place few but students of history are aware that during the Napoleonic wars a considerable British force was despatched under General Whitelock to capture Buenos Ayres. It signally failed, and the British colours taken on that occasion are still national trophies displayed in the cathedral of the city.

Again, the tyrant Rosas, some thirty years ago, from being a rough herdsman in the plains, rose to the position of Dictator over the vast territories extending from Bolivia to the Indian frontiers in the Pampas. Of an uncultivated mind, he taught his followers to ridicule the peaceful European settlers, and backed up his doctrine by subjecting them to every manner of indignity. Irony of fate! A few years later, after an atrocious career, he fled his country to save his life, and sought a refuge in Southampton. 'Quantum mutatus ab illo.' From being the incarnation of power in a country nearly as large as Western Europe, he lived and died perfectly unknown in the midst of a nation which, above all others, he had held up to the derision of his 'gaúcho' hordes.

His teaching, however, took root, and so to-day, wherever the name of Rosas is remembered, it is still a creed that foreigners are lacking in all virile qualities.

The cause of the jealousy with which the Argentines regard foreign settlers scarcely needs explanation. Let us consider that in the first instance the English people hold almost the entire national and provincial bonds, obligations representing revenues and land to an enormous amount. More than this, with scarcely an exception, we control from London all the railways throughout the country—the arteries without which the commercial life of the republic would cease to exist. Further, all the first-class business houses and industrial concerns are either owned, or where not owned, are largely managed by

Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Germans. Everywhere the story is the same—the Argentine seems incapable of ‘fending’ so to speak, for himself; he is little more than a puppet in the hands of abler men.

The immigration returns for the last few years afford interesting figures, especially when taken with their practical commentary in the shape of the population of such provinces as Santa Fé. The Italian population alone already outnumbers all the other nationalities in the country, the natives themselves included. Some are permanent settlers, some but a floating part of the population, but they are always increasing in number, and are in their own way doing as much for Argentina as British and French capital. As cheap labourers and farmers on a small scale they are turning the wilderness into cornlands; each one produces by his manual labour far more than he consumes, and although many after having made a little money take it with them out of the country, their work has been done, and their places are taken by others of their race with equal capacities for developing the land, each in his own small way. And here there are practically no labour disputes, no strikes; the flood of immigration is too strong, the individual immigrant contented with so very little.

And where the Italian labourer has not yet found his way, what is the state of affairs? Travelling to those still little known regions which lie along the frontiers of Bolivia and of the Indian countries of the Chaco, we look into a page of history which to the civilised world was written a hundred years ago. Here hatred of the European is strongest, and that amongst a class but little removed from serfdom. A thrifless improvident race of half-breed labourers, they are always in debt to their employers, and therefore always at their mercy—ready to sell their individual liberty for the wherewithal to gamble, or for the value of a few bottles of rum. Compared with them the Indian himself is a lofty type; as a labourer, or as a man, *per se*, infinitely better. And here amid this people, devoid of self-respect and of any aim beyond desire for present enjoyment, we find the most unconcealed scorn of the foreigner. Surely there have been few examples more striking than this of the lack of sympathy between the Latin and Germanic races. When Macaulay in his essay on Machiavelli discussed the different ideals of honour which lie at the bottom of the societies of northern and southern Europe, he spoke plain words of truth. To the legislators of the remoter provinces self-respect is synonymous with self-gain—their views of right are different from European views; they have until the last few years been barred in by deserts and savages from taking part in the progress of nineteenth-century ideas. Their standards are not so much the effect of inherent baseness as of ignorance—heritages of the past—but they nevertheless exist. Here there is no patriotism; the national government and the foreigner alike simply afford unlimited opportunities for chicanery, in the absence of healthy public opinion. Immigrants have as yet no direct influence in the government of the country, but their day will come. The Argentine is going more and more to the wall. In the great cities on the

plate and amongst the upper classes European ideas have taken good hold, and compared with the provincial governments, that of the National Confederation is most estimable. Railways are now opening up the country in every direction, and more particularly the temperate regions in Patagonia, such as Chubut, which are in every way adapted for colonists from northern Europe. The Argentine Republic is an actual illustration of a theory recently advanced in a work on the ‘evolution of societies.’ Here is rapidly taking place a natural selection, as applied to nations, after Darwin’s heart. But on one point we take leave to differ from Mr Benjamin Kidd. South America in the future will *not* be ruled by satraps from Europe, but by the scions of the Old-World stocks acclimatised in the territories south of Buenos Ayres.

THE SPECIAL ENVOY.

By CHARLES D. LESLIE.

WHEN Pepworth Tring, the well-known South African millionaire, sent for me, and after inquiring if I was at liberty for a few weeks, said that he was about to commission me to take a small map to his Johannesburg representative, I was rather surprised that he should go to the expense of a special messenger when the postal service was available.

‘It seems a very simple undertaking,’ I said.

But he speedily enlightened me.

‘Ah, that’s where you are wrong,’ he replied, giving me a shrewd glance. ‘In this case the post is not to be trusted, and an unscrupulous enemy will strain every nerve to defeat my intention.’

My present employer, a well-known Kimberley man, who had lately turned his attention to the Witwatersrand Gold Mines, was middle-aged, about fifty, but looked more, owing to the hard and adventurous life he had led. His tanned, weather-beaten face appeared commonplace enough, but behind the small steady gray eyes lay a quick brain and unerring judgment. Few, indeed, could boast with any degree of truth on ever having got the better of Pepworth Tring. As a judge of diamonds also he had barely an equal. All this I know from common hearsay.

‘You anticipate there will be an attempt to rob me during the journey?’

‘I am quite sure of it. The matter on the face of it is simple enough. This map’—(he held up a small piece of parchment a few square inches in size—it appeared to represent the course of a river, some red crosses were marked on one portion, and some lines of writing ran along the bottom)—‘has to be given to Mr Howard of Fox Street, Johannesburg. There your mission ends. But whether you will be able to accomplish it is another matter. Gibson, my old partner, is determined to obtain possession of this map by some means; he is rich, unscrupulous, and can command the services of men even more unscrupulous than himself. This is the reason I do not trust the post. The corruption prevalent among all Boer officials extends to the post-office; my letters have been opened. He has creatures there in his employ. You must trust no one, and conceal the paper in such a manner that it cannot be found.’

'But while on board ship it would surely be better to entrust it to the captain or purser?'

'That would be risky, and only postpone their attack on you. If you received the map back safely you would without doubt be robbed of it between Capetown and Johannesburg. No; when the boat reaches Capetown, they must be under the impression that you are not the bearer.'

'When am I to leave London?'

The *Roman* leaves the docks to-morrow and Plymouth on Saturday. Your berth is booked; Gibson is also a passenger, and several of his following. But perhaps I had better explain why this map is so important.

Gibson, like myself, is an old Kimberley man. We both did very well there, and lately like me he has been dealing in Transvaal mining property. We have often gone partners in various undertakings. In the autumn of '94, being then in Johannesburg—about six months ago—and feeling the want of a holiday, I determined to go on a shooting expedition through the Transvaal towards the sea. Accompanied by two Zulus, I carried out my intention, and after some weeks travelling we found ourselves in the low-country bordering on Swaziland. Here quite by chance I made a remarkable discovery. In the dried-up channel of what had been a river I came upon traces of diamonds. The find to my eyes was most promising; but before I could pursue my investigations further, one of my Zulus despatched to get food from a neighbouring kraal, came hot-foot with the news that the Swazis were up in arms. Irritated by some act of Boer oppression, they seemed inclined to wreak their vengeance on me, and so we fled forthwith for our very lives. Before leaving, I drew up a plan of the place, so that it could be found again.

After various adventures I reached Durban, and took ship for England. Meeting Gibson in London, I acquainted him in general terms with my discovery, stating that in the course of my journeying I had found diamonds. I had intended to take him into partnership in this affair, but the knowledge which I gained immediately afterwards that he had swindled me in the matter of some gold mines changed my purpose, and I broke with him for good.

Now the value of my find is problematical. Diamonds have not yet been found in paying quantity in the Transvaal. This place may be a second Kimberley, and shake the De Beers monopoly. It is quite possible. Therefore I want the ground pegged out in the usual way, and to register myself as the owner; but if Gibson could get hold of the map he would forestall me. It is not convenient for me to go myself just now, as I have some important business in hand; so not to delay obtaining the claims, I have ordered Howard to peg them out and register in my name, but he can do nothing until he has the particulars contained in this. Now, do you understand?

'Yes; but how far is Gibson cognisant of your plans?'

'He has found out that I intend sending the map immediately to Johannesburg. This office is watched; you will be shadowed on leaving, and when they find that you are a passenger by the

Roman they will conclude that you are my messenger. It will be your business to nullify that belief.'

'I see.'

'You had better pretend to be a new sub-manager sent out by me to represent my interests in Johannesburg. Now, can you, do you think, conceal the map in such a way that these thieves cannot get hold of it?'

I sat silent a few moments thinking over the situation, then my eyes strayed to some books lying on the table between us. I took up one. It was *Lock on Gold*, a standard work.

'I will do my best,' I said at length.

'Trust no one,' concluded my employer, giving me money for my journey and the boat ticket. 'Rely on yourself alone. Put the map in your breast-pocket for the present, but find a securer hiding-place before you go on board. Good-bye, and good luck to you!'

My preparations were soon made, and the following morning found me on board the *Roman*. I had reduced my luggage to as small a compass as possible. It consisted of two small portmanteaus which would go under my bunk, some wraps, and a few novels, with *Lock on Gold*, the latter obtained from my employer to sustain my character as a mining manager, and with its covers encased in gray calico. I had joined the ship at the docks to avoid the crush at Waterloo, and to see the mouth of the Thames. There were two other men in my cabin, for the ship was full, every berth being taken, but they had not yet come on board, so I arranged my belongings at leisure, and then went on deck as we left the dock to smoke and view the river and the miles of wharves and shipping as we slowly and majestically steamed out to sea. The ship was nearly empty, and I passed a quiet twenty-four hours anticipating the coming duel which was to take place, and wondering if my simple scheme would be successful.

The mail-bags and passengers came on board at Plymouth, and a scene of animation and confusion followed; but a rough sea and headwind calmed the exuberance of many of the company, and the dinner-tables in the saloon that evening showed an abundance of empty seats. Both my cabin mates succumbed, and I left them white and groaning. Fortunately I was a good sailor; and, having enjoyed my dinner, later in the evening found myself in the smoking-room smoking one of 'Jim' Gibson's cigars and engaged in a chat with that worthy, who was most friendly and evinced some curiosity about myself.

I told my tale, which he accepted with perhaps suspicious readiness.

'Employed by Tring, are you? Peppery fellow; I know him well. We used to be friends; now he hates me like poison.'

He introduced me to his friends, Spellman, Dunbarton, and Vandermitt, who severally expressed themselves delighted to make my acquaintance.

The first two or three days my adversaries only skirmished, tried to pump me, and dropped broad hints as to the advantages which would follow if I joined them—hints I ignored.

As, however, they felt pretty sure that I was the bearer of the coveted map, my portmanteaus were searched more than once, and my spare

clothes when I was absent from my cabin. It was Spellman who was told off for this portion of the quest ; finding I was not very cordial towards him, he struck up a friendship for one of my cabin mates, which gave him an excuse for entering at all hours. I did not think it advisable to enlighten the latter, as my attitude was to blandly ignore my adversaries' behaviour.

Spellman's researches proving of no avail, the great endeavour to discover if I had the paper took place about a week after Madeira was passed. I was playing in a whist tournament, and noticed that Dunbarton and Vandermit were playing nap with the two men who shared my cabin. I guessed that Spellman was making a thorough search, and as soon as I was at liberty I hurried there.

It had indeed been thorough. Every article had been taken out of the portmanteaus and examined, and the portmanteaus themselves cut and hacked in search of a secret hiding-place. Everything had been scrutinised ; even the gray calico cover pulled off *Lock* to make sure that nothing was between it and the binding. Nor was this all, for while I surveyed the wreck, I became conscious of an overpowering feeling of drowsiness, and knowledge came to me that I had been drugged. Too late I remembered having just accepted a drink from Gibson ; but I had only sense enough left to tumble into my bunk before falling into a heavy sleep.

They no doubt searched me to the skin that night, for I slept as the dead ; but though I woke next morning with a bad headache, I felt well pleased, for no result had rewarded their toil. Of course I made a fuss as to the conduct of some mysterious thieves, who had not even spared the lining of my boots, and certain inquiries were instituted which came to nothing. I innocently complained to Gibson as to the bad quality of his whisky, and there apparently the matter ended, for I was molested no more.

I felt that I had won, as I saw by my enemies' manner that they had decided they were mistaken in imagining I had the map ; but great cautiousness was still necessary till the journey's end. Never crow before you are out of the wood is an excellent piece of advice. Still, feeling that the worst was over, a sense of calm possessed me as I lounged in my Madeira chair, under the shade of the awning, for the tropical sun was very sultry, and made iced drinks a necessity instead of a luxury.

Gibson continued good friends with me, and often came and chatted as I languidly studied *Lock on Gold* in my deck-chair. As a practical mineralogist, he pointed out the best parts to study, and I imbibed much information valuable enough had I designed to turn miner. He was an amusing man, and his creed simple enough—'Get money, honestly if you can ; but get money.' A more efficient auctioneer for selling the numbers of the ship's run in the daily sweeps it would be impossible to find, and I enjoyed the privilege of acting auctioneer's clerk with *Lock* for a desk on my knee.

It was four o'clock on a Tuesday afternoon when we reached Capetown, and Gibson managed to get away by that evening's train, leaving two of his followers to bring his luggage on next

day when the rest of the passengers bound for the Rand travelled.

The third morning after landing found me in Fox Street, Johannesburg, seeking Howard's office. I had just seen the name on the window, and had ascended the steps to the door of the building when a passer-by pulled up on recognising me. It was Gibson.

'Hullo !' he said, 'where are you off to now ?'

The time for caution was passed, victory was mine, and I could safely enjoy my triumph. I surveyed the baffled financier with a smile of infinite satisfaction, and replied :

'I am the bearer of a certain document from Mr Tring to Mr Howard.'

From the expression on my face and the accent on my words, he read the truth, and knew that I had baffled him, and his face changed. Words failed him, for he was taken quite by surprise, and bewilderment rendered him speechless.

Enjoying his discomfiture a few seconds, I turned and went in, leaving him on the pavement below the most unhappy man in Johannesburg.

Having entered the outer office and given my name to a clerk, I was speedily shown into Mr Howard's private room. He greeted me warmly, and in the same breath inquired if I had been successful.

I said I had.

'That's good news. I've just got my mail and heard of your coming. Look — you see ; the envelope has been tampered with ! You are sure Gibson hasn't set eyes on the map ?'

'Absolutely,' I replied, then gave him a short account of the efforts made to secure it.

'Ay, ay, they wouldn't stick at much ; you're fortunate to get here with a whole skin. But where is it after all ?'

In answer I produced *Lock on Gold*, and, taking my penknife, cut off the gray calico cover, which I had put on again after it had been pulled off. Then inserting the point into the cover itself, I cut it open. There, snugly concealed, lay the precious map. I had, before leaving London, cut the cover open with a sharp knife, and placing the map in between, glued up the edges with great care. Being unable to absolutely conceal the fact that the cover had been cut, I had put the calico cover over, and when it had been torn off by the eager searcher he had never noticed that the binding itself had been cut.

Thus, safely and securely, the map had travelled, unseen by any eye, untouched by any hand, and now, having placed it in the possession of Mr Howard, my mission as a special envoy was over.

With the knowledge gained by the map, Howard took steps which very shortly made the land where Pepworth Tring found diamonds the property of that worthy, and I know no more, as nothing further has been heard of the discovery —no company has been publicly formed to work it. But I have a strong idea that the find turned up trumps, and that the reason of the silence is that it is too good a thing for the public to be admitted.

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